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ZERO ISSUE
APR '09
A CLASSIC TALE OF THE LEGION!
PLUS A SPECIAL
ORIGINS & OMENS
BY GEOFF JOHNS & FRANCIS MANAPUL!
COSMIC BOY
LIGHTNING LAD
DIRECT SALES
$1.00 US
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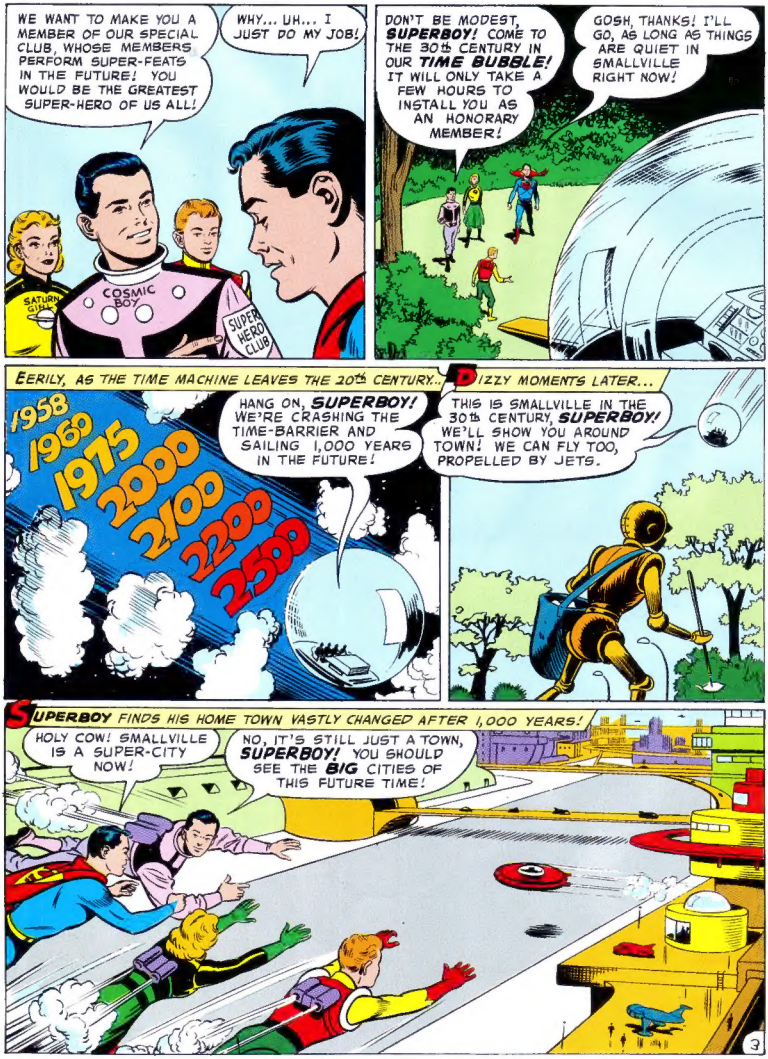
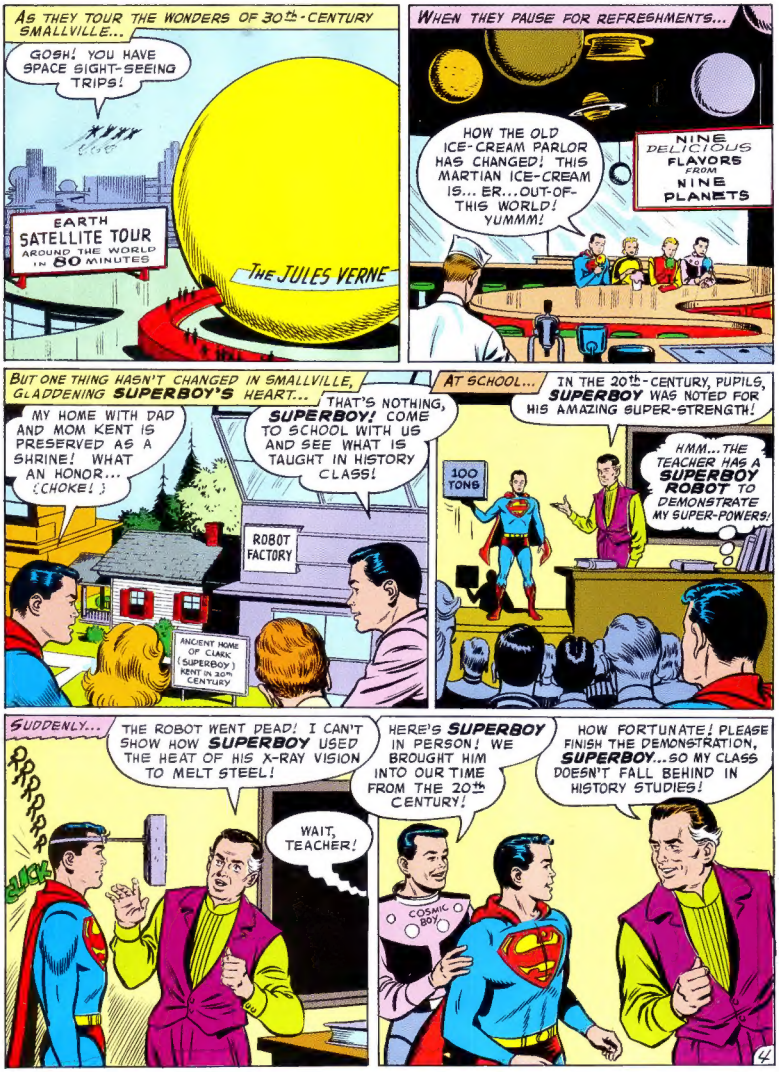
SUPERBOY
The ADVENTURES of SUPERMAN
WHEN HE WAS A BOY
IN ANY CONTEST OF OUTSTANDING FEATS, YOU WOULD EXPECT SUPERBOY TO WALK AWAY WITH ALL THE PRIZES! BUT DON'T CHEER TOO SOON FOR THE BOY OF STEEL, UNTIL YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN HE COMPETES WITH THREE YOUNGSTERS WHO HAVE GAINED STRANGE SUPER-POWERS OF THEIR OWN! THE INCREDIBLE WILL TAKE PLACE BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES, WHEN YOU SEE ALL HIS SUPER-POWERS FAILING TO WIN SUPERBOY A MEMBERSHIP IN...
THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES
MY MAGNETIC EYES WILL SLOW DOWN THAT CRIMINAL GETAWAY ROCKET! KNOCK OUT THEIR RAY-GUN WITH A BOLT, LIGHTNING BOY!
GOOD, COSMIC BOY! AND I'LL READ THEIR MINDS AND FIND OUT WHERE THEY HID THE LOOT!
WOW! THOSE KIDS, WITH ONLY ONE SUPER-POWER EACH, CAN DO SUPER-FEATS EQUAL TO ANY OF MINE!

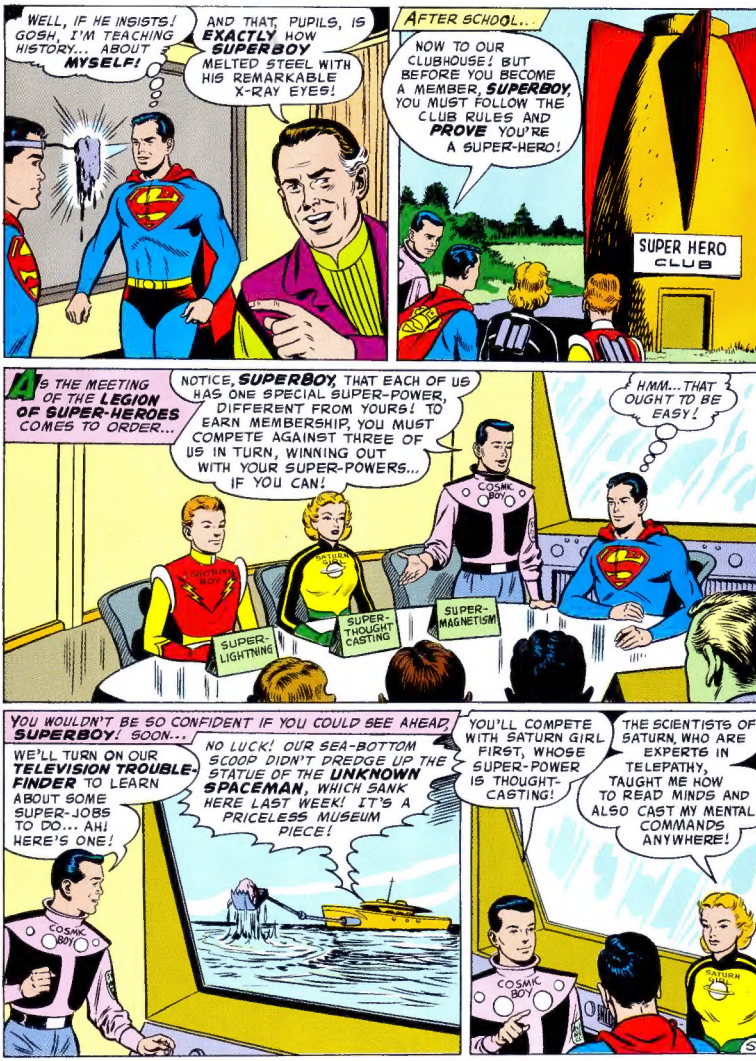
Presenting the classic first story of Superboy and the Legion of Super-Heroes from:

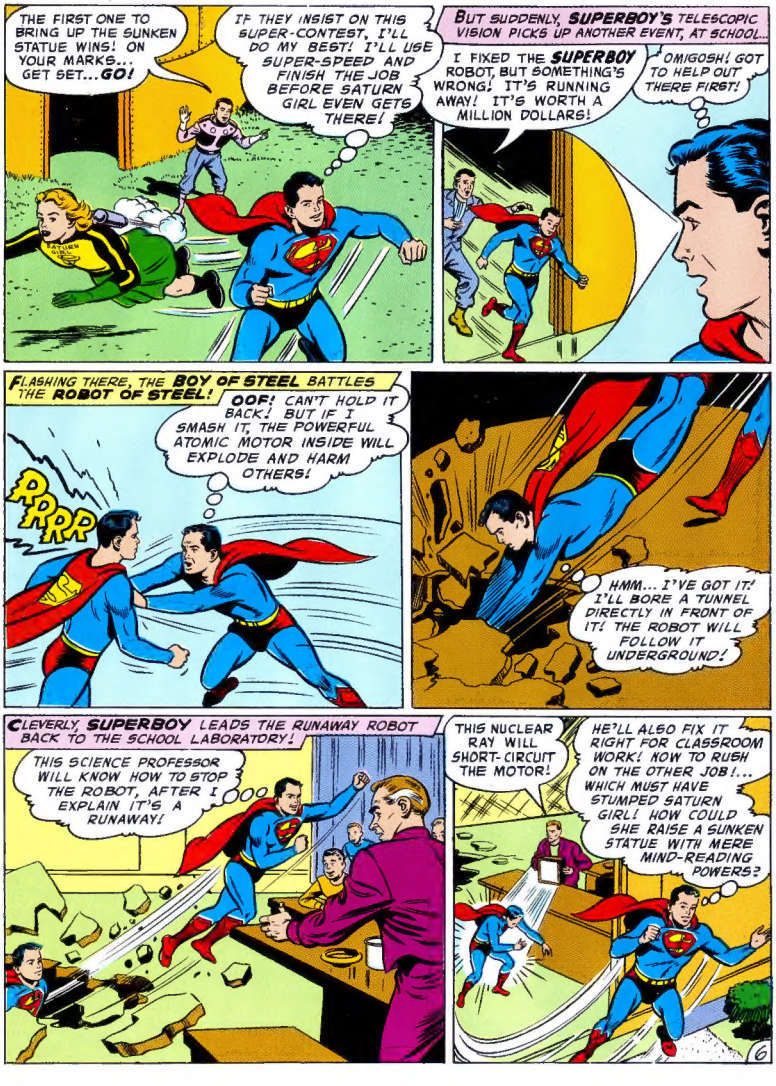
Adventure Comics #247 by: Otto Binder-Writer • Al Plastino-Artist

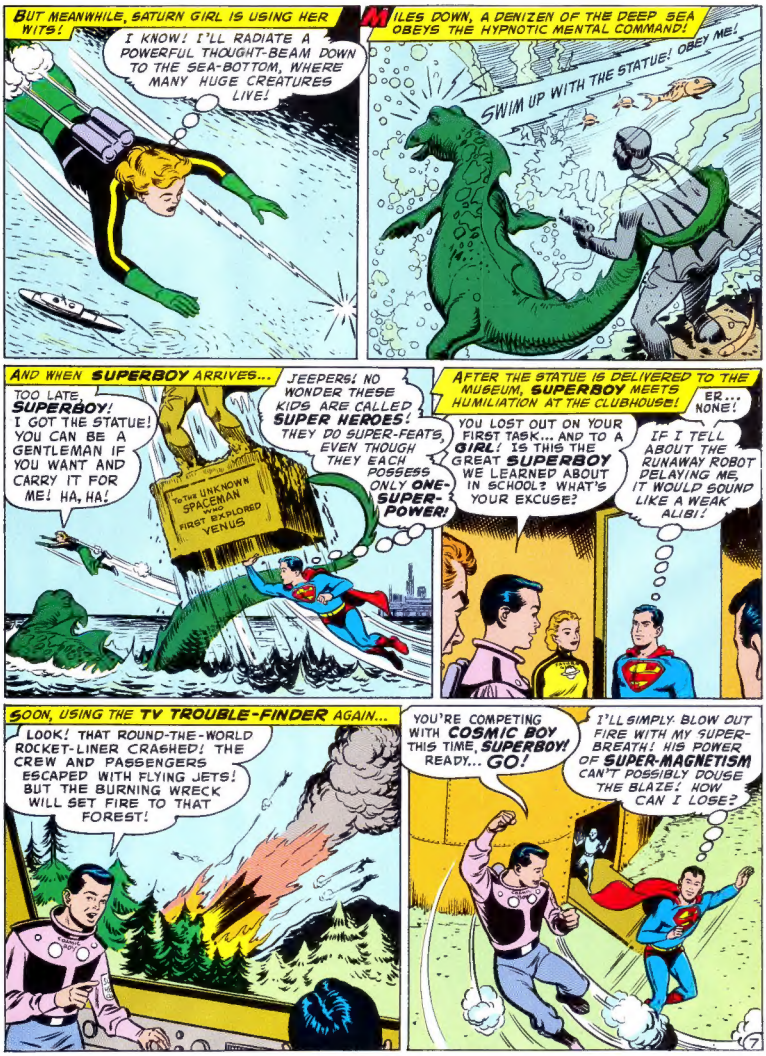
IN SMALLVILLE ONE DAY, CLARK KENT RECEIVES A SUDDEN SHOCK!
HELLO THERE, SUPERBOY!
YOU... ER...THINK I'M SUPERBOY? THAT IS A GOOD ONE! HA, HA!
BUT AT HOME, CLARK DOES DOFF HIS OUTER GARMENTS TO REVEAL HIMSELF AS THE FAMED BOY HERO!
THAT BOY IS NEW IN TOWN! GOSH, DID HE SOMEHOW FIND OUT MY SECRET IDENTITY? OH, HE MUST HAVE BEEN JOKING! I'LL FORGET IT AND GO ON PATROL!
ON PATROL, SUPERBOY CAN HARDLY BELIEVE HIS EARS WHEN...
HI, CLARK KENT!
OMIGOSH! ANOTHER BOY SEEMS TO KNOW MY SECRET! I--I'LL PRETEND TO IGNORE HIM AS IF HE'S WRONG!
LATER, SUPERBOY IS REALLY OVERWHELMED!
SUPERBOY! GIVE MY REGARDS TO MR. AND MRS. KENT, YOUR FOSTER PARENTS, WHEN YOU RETURN HOME!
GREAT GUNS! A GIRL, TOO! DOES EVERYBODY KNOW THE TRUTH NOW?
BUT AS THE TWO BOYS JOIN THE GIRL...
DON'T WORRY, SUPERBOY! ONLY WE THREE KNOW YOUR SECRET, AND WE TOOK CARE THAT NOBODY ELSE WAS WITHIN EARSHOT BEFORE! YOU'LL SOON SEE WHY WE KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU! WE ALSO HAVE "SECRET IDENTITIES"!
YOU SEE, WE'RE FROM THE FUTURE! NATURALLY, WE KNOW YOUR LIFE STORY FROM HISTORICAL RECORDS! WE WORE 20th-CENTURY CLOTHES TO HAVE A BIT OF FUN WITH YOU!
SO THAT'S IT! WHAT A RELIEF THAT MY SECRET IDENTITY IS STILL SAFE HERE IN SMALLVILLE!
COSMIC BOY
SATURN GIRL
LIGHTNING BOY

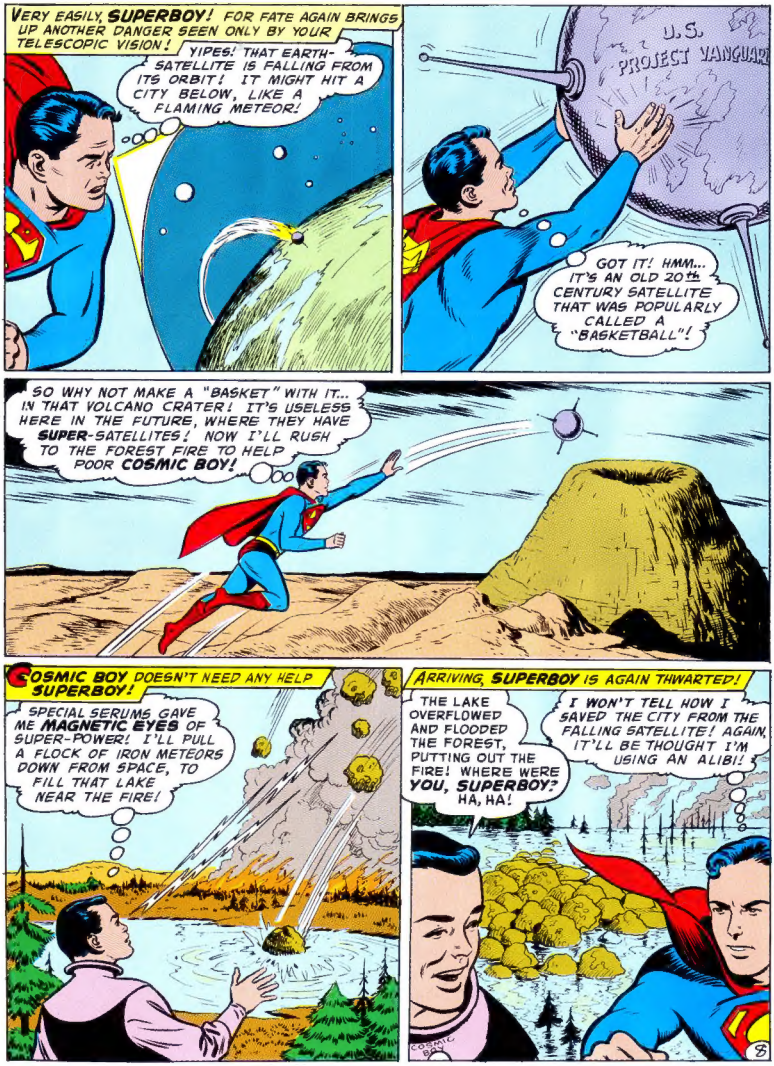

WE WANT TO MAKE YOU A MEMBER OF OUR SPECIAL CLUB, WHOSE MEMBERS PERFORM SUPER-FEATS IN THE FUTURE! YOU WOULD BE THE GREATEST SUPER-HERO OF US ALL!
WHY... UH... I JUST DO MY JOB!
SATURN GIRL
COSMIC BOY
SUPER HERO CLUB
DON'T BE MODEST, SUPERBOY! COME TO THE 30th CENTURY IN OUR TIME BUBBLE! IT WILL ONLY TAKE A FEW HOURS TO INSTALL YOU AS AN HONORARY MEMBER!
GOSH, THANKS! I'LL GO, AS LONG AS THINGS ARE QUIET IN SMALLVILLE RIGHT NOW!
EERILY, AS THE TIME MACHINE LEAVES THE 20th CENTURY...
1958
1960
1975
2000
2100
2200
2500
HANG ON, SUPERBOY! WE'RE CRASHING THE TIME-BARRIER AND SAILING 1,000 YEARS IN THE FUTURE!
DIZZY MOMENTS LATER...
THIS IS SMALLVILLE IN THE 30th CENTURY, SUPERBOY! WE'LL SHOW YOU AROUND TOWN! WE CAN FLY TOO, PROPELLED BY JETS.
SUPERBOY FINDS HIS HOME TOWN VASTLY CHANGED AFTER 1,000 YEARS!
HOLY COW! SMALLVILLE IS A SUPER-CITY NOW!
NO, IT'S STILL JUST A TOWN, SUPERBOY! YOU SHOULD SEE THE BIG CITIES OF THIS FUTURE TIME!


AS THEY TOUR THE WONDERS OF 30th-CENTURY SMALLVILLE...
GOSH! YOU HAVE SPACE SIGHT-SEEING TRIPS!
EARTH SATELLITE TOUR AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 MINUTES
THE JULES VERNE
WHEN THEY PAUSE FOR REFRESHMENTS...
HOW THE OLD ICE-CREAM PARLOR HAS CHANGED! THIS MARTIAN ICE-CREAM IS... ER... OUT-OF-THIS WORLD! YUMMM!
NINE DELICIOUS FLAVORS FROM NINE PLANETS
BUT ONE THING HASN'T CHANGED IN SMALLVILLE, GLADDENING SUPERBOY'S HEART...
MY HOME WITH DAD AND MOM KENT IS PRESERVED AS A SHRINE! WHAT AN HONOR... (CHOKE!)
THAT'S NOTHING, SUPERBOY! COME TO SCHOOL WITH US AND SEE WHAT IS TAUGHT IN HISTORY CLASS!
ROBOT FACTORY
ANCIENT HOME OF CLARK (SUPERBOY) KENT IN 20th CENTURY
AT SCHOOL...
IN THE 20th-CENTURY, PUPILS, SUPERBOY WAS NOTED FOR HIS AMAZING SUPER-STRENGTH!
100 TONS
HMM... THE TEACHER HAS A SUPERBOY ROBOT TO DEMONSTRATE MY SUPER-POWERS!
SUDDENLY...
RRRRRR
CLICK
THE ROBOT WENT DEAD! I CAN'T SHOW HOW SUPERBOY USED THE HEAT OF HIS X-RAY VISION TO MELT STEEL!
WAIT, TEACHER!
HERE'S SUPERBOY IN PERSON! WE BROUGHT HIM INTO OUR TIME FROM THE 20th CENTURY!
COSMIC BOY
HOW FORTUNATE! PLEASE FINISH THE DEMONSTRATION, SUPERBOY... SO MY CLASS DOESN'T FALL BEHIND IN HISTORY STUDIES!
4


WELL, IF HE INSISTS! GOSH, I'M TEACHING HISTORY... ABOUT MYSELF!
AND THAT, PUPILS, IS EXACTLY HOW SUPERBOY MELTED STEEL WITH HIS REMARKABLE X-RAY EYES!
AFTER SCHOOL...
NOW TO OUR CLUBHOUSE! BUT BEFORE YOU BECOME A MEMBER, SUPERBOY, YOU MUST FOLLOW THE CLUB RULES AND PROVE YOU'RE A SUPER-HERO!
SUPER HERO CLUB
AS THE MEETING OF THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES COMES TO ORDER...
NOTICE, SUPERBOY, THAT EACH OF US HAS ONE SPECIAL SUPER-POWER, DIFFERENT FROM YOURS! TO EARN MEMBERSHIP, YOU MUST COMPETE AGAINST THREE OF US IN TURN, WINNING OUT WITH YOUR SUPER-POWERS... IF YOU CAN!
HMM... THAT OUGHT TO BE EASY!
COSMIC BOY
SATURN GIRL
LIGHTNING BOY
SUPER-LIGHTNING
SUPER-THOUGHT CASTING
SUPER-MAGNETISM
YOU WOULDN'T BE SO CONFIDENT IF YOU COULD SEE AHEAD, SUPERBOY! SOON...
WE'LL TURN ON OUR TELEVISION TROUBLE-FINDER TO LEARN ABOUT SOME SUPER-JOBS TO DO... AH! HERE'S ONE!
NO LUCK! OUR SEA-BOTTOM SCOOP DIDN'T DREDGE UP THE STATUE OF THE UNKNOWN SPACEMAN, WHICH SANK HERE LAST WEEK! IT'S A PRICELESS MUSEUM PIECE!
YOU'LL COMPETE WITH SATURN GIRL FIRST, WHOSE SUPER-POWER IS THOUGHT-CASTING!
THE SCIENTISTS OF SATURN, WHO ARE EXPERTS IN TELEPATHY, TAUGHT ME HOW TO READ MINDS AND ALSO CAST MY MENTAL COMMANDS ANYWHERE!
COSMIC BOY
SATURN GIRL
5


THE FIRST ONE TO BRING UP THE SUNKEN STATUE WINS! ON YOUR MARKS... GET SET... GO!
IF THEY INSIST ON THIS SUPER-CONTEST, I'LL DO MY BEST! I'LL USE SUPER-SPEED AND FINISH THE JOB BEFORE SATURN GIRL EVEN GETS THERE!
BUT SUDDENLY, SUPERBOY'S TELESCOPIC VISION PICKS UP ANOTHER EVENT, AT SCHOOL...
I FIXED THE SUPERBOY ROBOT, BUT SOMETHING'S WRONG! IT'S RUNNING AWAY! IT'S WORTH A MILLION DOLLARS!
OMIGOSH! GOT TO HELP OUT THERE FIRST!
FLASHING THERE, THE BOY OF STEEL BATTLES THE ROBOT OF STEEL!
OOF! CAN'T HOLD IT BACK! BUT IF I SMASH IT, THE POWERFUL ATOMIC MOTOR INSIDE WILL EXPLODE AND HARM OTHERS!
RRRR
HMM... I'VE GOT IT! I'LL BORE A TUNNEL DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF IT! THE ROBOT WILL FOLLOW IT UNDERGROUND!
CLEVERLY, SUPERBOY LEADS THE RUNAWAY ROBOT BACK TO THE SCHOOL LABORATORY!
THIS SCIENCE PROFESSOR WILL KNOW HOW TO STOP THE ROBOT, AFTER I EXPLAIN IT'S A RUNAWAY!
THIS NUCLEAR RAY WILL SHORT-CIRCUIT THE MOTOR!
HE'LL ALSO FIX IT RIGHT FOR CLASSROOM WORK! NOW TO RUSH ON THE OTHER JOB!... WHICH MUST HAVE STUMPED SATURN GIRL! HOW COULD SHE RAISE A SUNKEN STATUE WITH MERE MIND-READING POWERS?
6


BUT MEANWHILE, SATURN GIRL IS USING HER WITS!
I KNOW! I'LL RADIATE A POWERFUL THOUGHT-BEAM DOWN TO THE SEA-BOTTOM, WHERE MANY HUGE CREATURES LIVE!
MILES DOWN, A DENIZEN OF THE DEEP SEA OBEYS THE HYPNOTIC MENTAL COMMAND!
SWIM UP WITH THE STATUE! OBEY ME!
AND WHEN SUPERBOY ARRIVES...
TOO LATE, SUPERBOY! I GOT THE STATUE! YOU CAN BE A GENTLEMAN IF YOU WANT AND CARRY IT FOR ME! HA, HA!
TO THE UNKNOWN SPACEMAN WHO FIRST EXPLORED VENUS
JEEPERS! NO WONDER THESE KIDS ARE CALLED SUPER HEROES! THEY DO SUPER-FEATS, EVEN THOUGH THEY EACH POSSESS ONLY ONE-SUPER-POWER!
AFTER THE STATUE IS DELIVERED TO THE MUSEUM, SUPERBOY MEETS HUMILIATION AT THE CLUBHOUSE!
YOU LOST OUT ON YOUR FIRST TASK... AND TO A GIRL! IS THIS THE GREAT SUPERBOY WE LEARNED ABOUT IN SCHOOL? WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE?
ER... NONE!
IF I TELL ABOUT THE RUNAWAY ROBOT DELAYING ME, IT WOULD SOUND LIKE A WEAK ALIBI!
SOON, USING THE TV TROUBLE-FINDER AGAIN...
LOOK! THAT ROUND-THE-WORLD ROCKET-LINER CRASHED! THE CREW AND PASSENGERS ESCAPED WITH FLYING JETS! BUT THE BURNING WRECK WILL SET FIRE TO THAT FOREST!
YOU'RE COMPETING WITH COSMIC BOY THIS TIME, SUPERBOY! READY... GO!
I'LL SIMPLY BLOW OUT FIRE WITH MY SUPER-BREATH! HIS POWER OF SUPER-MAGNETISM CAN'T POSSIBLY DOUSE THE BLAZE! HOW CAN I LOSE?


VERY EASILY, SUPERBOY! FOR FATE AGAIN BRINGS UP ANOTHER DANGER SEEN ONLY BY YOUR TELESCOPIC VISION!
YIPES! THAT EARTH-SATELLITE IS FALLING FROM ITS ORBIT! IT MIGHT HIT A CITY BELOW, LIKE A FLAMING METEOR!
U.S. PROJECT VANGUARD
GOT IT! HMM... IT'S AN OLD 20th CENTURY SATELLITE THAT WAS POPULARLY CALLED A "BASKETBALL"!
SO WHY NOT MAKE A "BASKET" WITH IT... IN THAT VOLCANO CRATER! IT'S USELESS HERE IN THE FUTURE, WHERE THEY HAVE SUPER-SATELLITES! NOW I'LL RUSH TO THE FOREST FIRE TO HELP POOR COSMIC BOY!
COSMIC BOY DOESN'T NEED ANY HELP SUPERBOY!
SPECIAL SERUMS GAVE ME MAGNETIC EYES OF SUPER-POWER! I'LL PULL A FLOCK OF IRON METEORS DOWN FROM SPACE, TO FILL THAT LAKE NEAR THE FIRE!
ARRIVING, SUPERBOY IS AGAIN THWARTED!
THE LAKE OVERFLOWED AND FLOODED THE FOREST, PUTTING OUT THE FIRE! WHERE WERE YOU, SUPERBOY? HA, HA!
I WON'T TELL HOW I SAVED THE CITY FROM THE FALLING SATELLITE! AGAIN, IT'LL BE THOUGHT I'M USING AN ALIBI!
COSMIC
8

BACK AT THE CLUB, SUPERBOY WINCES AS...
YOU'RE NOT DOING SO GOOD, SUPERBOY! YOU HAVE MANY SUPER-POWERS, YET YOU CAN'T BEAT US WITH OUR SINGLE POWERS! YOU ONLY GET ONE MORE CHANCE AGAINST LIGHTNING BOY!
I-- I'VE GOT TO WIN THE THIRD AND FINAL CONTEST!
SUPERBOY'S MEMBERSHIP CONTEST
① WINNER, SATURN GIRL... LOSER, SUPERBOY
② WINNER, COSMIC BOY... LOSER, SUPERBOY
WHEN THE NEXT EMERGENCY ARISES...
THE NOVA EXPRESS LEFT FOR MARS, WITH A LEAKING FUEL TANK! IT'LL BE STALLED IN MID-SPACE IF THEY DON'T TURN BACK! RADIO WARNINGS WERE CUT OFF BY SPACE STATIC! FIND A WAY TO WARN THEM... GO!
I'LL FLY AFTER THE SPACESHIP! NOTHING CAN SIDETRACK ME THE THIRD TIME!
BUT SUPER-BAD-LUCK SEEMS TO HOUND SUPERBOY FOR, AT THAT MOMENT...
THE INVISIBLE EAGLE OF NEPTUNE JUST ESCAPED FROM THAT HOLE! ROCKET-LINERS MAY BUMP INTO IT WITHOUT SEEING IT!
THAT'S WORSE DANGER THAN WHAT THE SPACESHIP FACES! GOT TO CHASE THAT CRITTER DOWN!
INTERPLANETARY ZOO
BUT HOW, SUPERBOY?
GOSH, I MIGHT SEARCH HOURS FOR THE INVISIBLE BIRD AND NEVER BLUNDER INTO IT! HMM... I HAVE AN IDEA! I'LL PICK UP AN ICEBERG AT SEA!
RETURNING AT SUPER-SPEED, WHAT IS SUPERBOY'S STRANGE PLAN?
THIS WILL COOL THE AIR FOR MILES AROUND! MY PLAN SHOULD WORK BEFORE THE CITY SUFFERS TOO MUCH DISCOMFORT FROM THE COLD!

SHORTLY, **SUPERBOY** HURLS THE ICEBERG OUT TO SEA AND...

AH, IT WORKED! **FROST** FORMED ON THE EAGLE, MAKING IT VISIBLE... JUST AS FROST COVERS A TRANSPARENT WINDOW PANE! NOW I CAN CAPTURE IT AND RETURN IT TO THE INTERPLANETARY ZOO!

MEANWHILE, **LIGHTNING BOY** HAS SOLVED HIS TASK...

MY HANDS ARE LIKE THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE POLES OF A BATTERY! EACH TIME I CLAP THEM TOGETHER, A SUPER-LIGHTNING FLASH LEAPS FORTH!

ZAP

INGENIOUSLY, THE SUPER-HERO OF THE FUTURE FINISHES A GIGANTIC SIGN WITH ELECTRIC "SKY WRITING"!

AHOY, NOVA EXPRESS! YOUR FUEL TANK IS LEAKING! RETURN FOR REPAIRS

I USED SPECIAL LIGHTNING-FLASHES THAT DON'T FADE OUT FOR TEN SECONDS! THE BRIGHT SIGN I MADE WILL BE VISIBLE FOR A MILLION MILES IN SPACE, BRINGING THE SPACESHIP BACK!

LATER AT THE CLUBHOUSE, **SUPERBOY'S** WORST MOMENT COMES!

THREE TIMES YOU FAILED IN THE CONTEST, **SUPERBOY!** SORRY, BUT WE **REJECT** YOU FROM THE **LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES!**

(GULP!)... BUT I STILL WON'T TRY TO ALIBI MY WAY OUT OF THIS! I'LL TAKE IT WITH A SMILE!

SUPERBOY HOLDS HIS SMILE DESPITE THE JIBES THAT FOLLOW HIM TO THE DOOR!

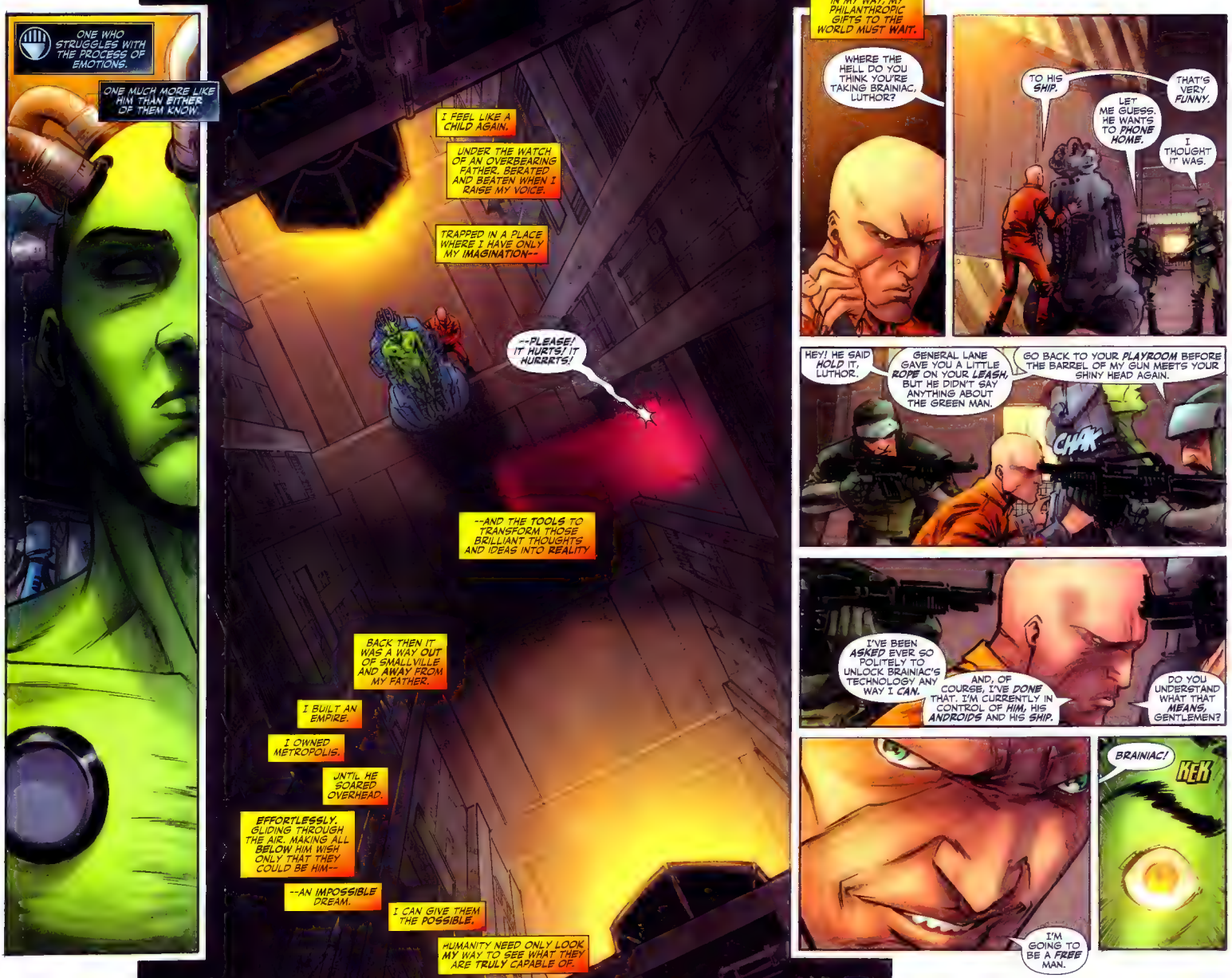
HA, HA! ONLY THE BACKWARD 20th-CENTURY PEOPLE COULD THINK HIM A "SUPER-HERO"! BET THEY **EXAGGERATED** HIS SUPER-DEEDS! RIGHT, **SUPERBOY?**

IT... ER... COULD BE! WELL, SO LONG! NO HARD FEELINGS ON MY PART!

BUT SUPERBOY'S BRAVE SMILE COVERS A BROKEN HEART!
HOW WILL I EVER TELL THEM BACK IN SMALLVILLE THAT THEIR "SUPER-HERO" FLUNKED OUT OF THE SUPER-HERO CLUB?... (SOB!)
WAIT, SUPERBOY! COME BACK!
BUT--BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND! I'VE BEEN REJECTED...
NO, YOU'RE A MEMBER, SUPERBOY! WE GAVE YOU A BAD TIME ONLY AS YOUR INITIATION! WE DELIBERATELY DECOYED YOU ELSEWHERE DURING EACH CONTEST! FOR INSTANCE, WHEN YOU AND I FIRST RACED AWAY ON OUR JOB...
SATURN GIRL
"... I SECRETLY BEAMED A TELEPATHIC COMMAND INTO THE ELECTRONIC BRAIN OF THE ROBOT SUPERBOY AT SCHOOL..."
ATTENTION, SUPERBOY ROBOT! I COMMAND YOU---
...TO BECOME A RUNAWAY!
"AND I, COSMIC BOY, USED MY MAGNETIC EYES ON THE WAY TO THE FIRE..."
MY MAGNETIC-VISION WILL PULL THAT OLD SATELLITE OUT OF ITS ORBIT! I'LL MAKE SURE IT FALLS HARMLESSLY AT SEA IF SUPERBOY FAILS TO STOP IT!
"AND IT WAS EASY FOR ME, LIGHTNING BOY, TO SEND A SUPER-FLASH TOWARD THE INTERPLANETARY ZOO..."
THIS WILL BURST A HOLE IN THE ZOO'S PLASTIC DOME, LETTING THE INVISIBLE-EAGLE ESCAPE! SATURN GIRL CAN ALWAYS USE HER MENTAL COMMANDS TO MAKE IT RETURN IF SUPERBOY FAILS!
IT WAS ONLY YOUR INITIATION, AND IT PROVED YOU'RE A SUPER-GOOD SPORT, TAKING IT ALL WITH A SMILE!
HOORAY FOR SUPERBOY, OUR NEW MEMBER!
11

SUDDENLY, ANOTHER ALARM...
THAT'S SOUTH POLE CITY, HEATED BY A GIANT COSMIC LAMP! BUT IT BURNED OUT AND THE TOWER IS TOPPLING! WE CAN'T GET THERE IN TIME...
I CAN!
SUPER-SPEED HURTLES THE BOY OF STEEL TO THE SOUTH POLE!
I FLASHED INTO SPACE FIRST TO PICK UP THIS MAGNETIC METEOR! ITS POWERFUL PULL WILL STRAIGHTEN THE TOWER WHILE A REPAIR CREW GETS TO WORK!
I BORROWED SALT FROM THEM TO SEED THESE CLOUDS, CAUSING HEAT LIGHTNING! IT WILL KEEP SOUTH POLE CITY WARM UNTIL THE ATOMIC HEAT LAMP IS FIXED!
LATER, BACK AT THE CLUBHOUSE...
I'LL BET YOU'RE WONDERING WHY I SIMPLY DIDN'T SHOVE THE TOWER STRAIGHT WITH MY SUPER-STRENGTH?
GOSH, YOU... ER... READ MY MIND! HMM... NOW I GET IT! YOU HAD YOUR LITTLE JOKE WITH US, TOO!
SATURN GIRL
COSMIC BOY
YOU JUST USED MAGNETISM... LIGHTNING... AND A MIND-READING TRICK TO DUPLICATE OUR POWERS! AND ALL ON ONE JOB! YOU'VE EARNED OUR HIGHEST AWARD!
COSMIC BOY
SUPERBOY
FINALLY, AFTER THE TIME-BUBBLE RETURNS SUPERBOY TO HIS HOME IN 20th-CENTURY SMALLVILLE...
GOSH, DAD! I'LL STILL HAVE THIS HONORED REPUTATION A THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW IN 30th-CENTURY SMALLVILLE!
SUPER-HERO NUMBER ONE
THE END.
12

I SERVE THE UNIVERSE NO MORE.
I SERVE ANOTHER FORCE THAT HAS CREPT INTO MY BEING AND REVEALED TO ME THE UNFATHOMABLE POWER WITHIN THE VACUUM OF FRIGID EMPTINESS.
THEY HUNGER AS HE DOES.
AND THIS BOOK--THE BOOK OF THE BLACK--CONTAINS ALL WHO GLOW WITH THE INVISIBLE LIGHT OF SENTIENT EMOTION.
YET DEEP WITHIN THESE PAGES OF BEINGS WITH POWER AND UNIFORMS SHINES ONE WHO HAS NEITHER, BUT WHO AFFECTS THEIR LIVES LIKE NO OTHER.
SHE WAS ONCE A LOYAL MEMBER OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE UNIVERSE, FOUNDERS OF THE GREEN LANTERN CORPS. BUT SINCE SHE BURNED AT THE HAND OF THE ANTI-MONITOR, HER SOUL ROTS WITH DARKNESS. UNBEKNOWNST TO HER FELLOW ORAS, HER LOYALTIES NOW LIE ELSEWHERE. THE GUARDIANS OF THE UNIVERSE TAKE NO NAMES, YET SOON THIS ONE WILL BE KNOWN AS SCAR.
LEX LUTHOR IS NOT HUMBLE.
NOR GENEROUS.
NOR COMPASSIONATE.
NOR DOES HE DESIRE TO BE.
HOWEVER, HE IS DRIVEN TO THE FURTHEST EDGE OF THOUGHT AND PURPOSE.
AND HE WILL FACILITATE A BEING THAT MAY WELL DISRUPT OUR FRENZY.
ORIGINS & OMENS
GEOFF JOHNS WRITER
FRANCIS MANAPUL ARTIST
SWANDS LETTERER
BRIAN BUCCELLATO COLORIST
SEAN RYAN ASSOCIATE EDITOR
ELISABETH V. GEHRLEIN EDITOR


ONE WHO STRUGGLES WITH THE PROCESS OF EMOTIONS.
ONE MUCH MORE LIKE HIM THAN EITHER OF THEM KNOW.
I FEEL LIKE A CHILD AGAIN.
UNDER THE WATCH OF AN OVERBEARING FATHER. BERATED AND BEATEN WHEN I RAISE MY VOICE.
TRAPPED IN A PLACE WHERE I HAVE ONLY MY IMAGINATION--
--PLEASE! IT HURTS! IT HURRRTS!
--AND THE TOOLS TO TRANSFORM THOSE BRILLIANT THOUGHTS AND IDEAS INTO REALITY
BACK THEN IT WAS A WAY OUT OF SMALLVILLE AND AWAY FROM MY FATHER.
I BUILT AN EMPIRE.
I OWNED METROPOLIS.
UNTIL HE SOARED OVERHEAD.
EFFORTLESSLY, GLIDING THROUGH THE AIR, MAKING ALL BELOW HIM WISH ONLY THAT THEY COULD BE HIM--
--AN IMPOSSIBLE DREAM.
I CAN GIVE THEM THE POSSIBLE.
HUMANITY NEED ONLY LOOK MY WAY TO SEE WHAT THEY ARE TRULY CAPABLE OF.
BUT WITH SUPERMAN IN MY WAY, MY PHILANTHROPIC GIFTS TO THE WORLD MUST WAIT.
WHERE THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TAKING BRAINIAC, LUTHOR?
TO HIS SHIP.
LET ME GUESS. HE WANTS TO PHONE HOME.
I THOUGHT IT WAS.
THAT'S VERY FUNNY.
HEY! HE SAID HOLD IT, LUTHOR.
GENERAL LANE GAVE YOU A LITTLE ROPE ON YOUR LEASH, BUT HE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THE GREEN MAN.
GO BACK TO YOUR PLAYROOM BEFORE THE BARREL OF MY GUN MEETS YOUR SHINY HEAD AGAIN.
CHAK
I'VE BEEN ASKED EVER SO POLITELY TO UNLOCK BRAINIAC'S TECHNOLOGY ANY WAY I CAN.
AND, OF COURSE, I'VE DONE THAT. I'M CURRENTLY IN CONTROL OF HIM, HIS ANDROIDS AND HIS SHIP.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT MEANS, GENTLEMEN?
I'M GOING TO BE A FREE MAN.
BRAINIAC!
KEK

NKKK!
KKTCH!
I'D ASK YOU TO GIVE GENERAL LANE MY REGARDS--
--BUT I'LL LEAVE A NOTE.
KRRTCH
KRRTCH

YOU'D THINK THEY'D LEARN BY NOW.
LEX LUTHOR IS NO ONE'S PRISONER.

KIK KIK KOK
YOU ARE MISTAKEN, LEX LUTHOR.
BRAINIAC IS NO ONE'S PRISONER.
YOU BELIEVE YOUR RUDIMENTARY CONTROL OVER MY PROBES AND MY CRAFT PUTS YOU IN CONTROL OF ME.
HK!
I ALLOWED THAT, HUMAN.
SO I MIGHT BE REUNITED WITH MY BIO-SHELL.
BUT WE ARE NOT LEAVING THIS FACILITY.
WE ARE STAYING WITHIN THESE WALLS.
AND I WILL TELL YOU WHY...
...YOU AND I ARE WORKING TOGTHER.
THE BOOK MAKES NO MENTION OF BRAINIAC...

...NO. THERE IS ANOTHER LUTHOR WILL HAVE CONTROL OVER...
...BUT HE IS DEAD.
AND WE CONTROL THE DEAD.
FOR ONCE I BEAR WITNESS TO THE BOOK OF THE BLACK...
...AND I QUESTION WHAT IT SHOWS ME.
THE DEAD WILL SAVE YOU, LEX LUTHOR.
FROM BRAINIAC.
FROM SUPERMAN.
AND FROM YOURSELF.
TO BE CONTINUED THIS JUNE IN Adventure COMICS #1

DC NATION:
Battle for the Cowl

It's been quite a busy year for Batman. Grant Morrison put him through the ultimate challenge in R.I.P. and Final Crisis, and as you read this you're still in the process of figuring out the true fate of Bruce Wayne. Up next is the stunning "Whatever Happened to the Caped Crusader?" by Neil Gaiman and Andy Kubert in Batman #686 and Detective Comics #853. And then in March the battle commences.

Battle for the Cowl begins with total chaos in Gotham City. Batman's been missing, and the streets are on fire. Many heroes rush to fill the void, but who will ultimately wear the mantle of the Bat? Written and illustrated by Tony Daniel, Battle for the Cowl is a no-holds-barred fight to the finish with impossibly high stakes for the participants. In the wake of this series comes a selection of one-shots and miniseries that explore how different this part of the DCU will be from here on out. How does the Gotham City Police Department deal with the changed status quo? What new villains have arrived in town? Who is Azrael? Exactly what cure is Oracle searching for? All of this leads to a stunning conclusion in May. Stay tuned! In the meantime here's a handy reference to all the Battle for the Cowl related material:

MARCH

Gotham Gazette: Batman Dead?
Battle for the Cowl #1 (of 3)
Azrael #1
Oracle: The Cure #1
Battle for the Cowl: Commissioner Gordon

APRIL

Battle for the Cowl: Man-Bat
Battle for the Cowl #2 (of 3)
Azrael #2
Oracle: The Cure #2
Battle for the Cowl: Arkham Asylum
Battle for the Cowl: The Underground

MAY

Azrael #3
Oracle: The Cure #3
Battle for the Cowl #3 (of 3)
Gotham Gazette: Batman Alive?

JUNE

Well…we can't tell you yet…but it's BIG!

NEXT IN...

ADVENTURE COMICS #1

Didn't see that one coming, did ya? Come back in June for the all-new, monthly ADVENTURE COMICS!

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